

The Nebraska Game and Parks Commission administers a *Landowner Incentive Program (LIP)* grant received from the US Fish and Wildlife Service. The purpose of this grant is to provide cost-share assistance to private landowners for the protection, enhancement and restoration of habitat for at-risk species on private land. The majority of the at-risk species in the state exist on our declining tallgrass and shortgrass prairies.

Private landowners who own native tallgrass, mixed-grass or shortgrass prairies, wetland, or other diverse native lands are eligible. Biologists are available to assist with management techniques that benefit both the landowner and native wildlife, which may include:

- **Tree removal**
- **Prescribed burning**
- **Fence and water development for rotational grazing**
- **Native prairie interseeding**
- **Conservation easements**
- **Other beneficial strategies**



The burrowing owl is one of many at risk species in Nebraska.

The grant allows for cost share **up to 75%** of project costs. LIP contracts are with the Nebraska Game and Parks Commission, are primarily 10 years in length, and are developed with the management and goals of the individual landowner in mind.



Before and after LIP projects in the Loess Canyons (above) and in a tallgrass prairie (below) to benefit prairie chickens and other native grassland birds.



Historically, Nebraska's native vegetation was principally prairie, comprised of tallgrass prairie in the east, mixedgrass prairie in the central part of the state, and shortgrass prairie in the west. Agricultural development and other land-use changes have dramatically altered Nebraska's native landscape. **Over 98% of the state's tallgrass prairie, over 60% of its mixedgrass prairie, and over 50% of its shortgrass/mixedgrass prairie mosaic has been altered.** Although a few high quality remnant prairies exist, overgrazing, herbicides, fire suppression and/or invasive plants have impacted much of the state's remaining prairies. Despite a growing awareness of the need for prairie conservation, native grasslands continue to be converted.

Nebraska's prairies are home to a wide array of wildlife and plants, including some of the state's most imperiled species. **Fourteen of Nebraska's twenty-eight threatened and endangered species are directly associated with prairies and a dozen more are indirectly linked.** The Nebraska Natural Heritage Program has listed nearly 100 prairie-dependent species as critically imperiled, imperiled, or rare.



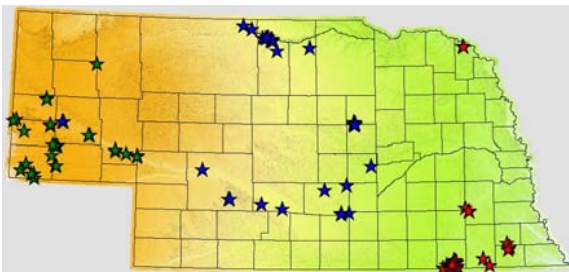
An adult swift fox and young in a shortgrass prairie in western Box Butte County, Nebraska.

With the help of LIP the Nebraska Game and Parks Commission hopes to improve the long-term viability of native prairie lands and increase public awareness to the importance of conserving and maintaining habitats for keeping species from becoming endangered.



Above: A drip torch is used to start a prescribed fire in north-central Nebraska.

Below: Map showing current LIP projects in the state.



- ★ Conservation Toolbox
- ★ Tallgrass Prairie
- ★ Shortgrass Prairie

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Landowner Incentive Program



*FOR PRIVATE LAND
CONSERVATION*



**Nebraska Game
and Parks
Commission**